Next AUG Meeting

Sunday, February 17th at 2pm

(Doors open at 1pm, meeting starts at 2pm sharp)

**AUG meetings are held at Victoria College Burwood Campus
Burwood Highway, Burwood - Melways map 61 reference B5.**

AMIGA Users Group Inc.

P.O. Box 684E, Melbourne 3001, Victoria, Australia.

Who Are WE?

The Amiga Users Group is a not-for-profit association of people interested in the Amiga computer and related topics. With over 1000 members, we are the largest independent association of Amiga users in Australia. We DO NOT condone software piracy. We can be reached via an answering machine at:

527 1995

Club Meetings

Club meetings are held at 2pm on the third Sunday of each month at Victoria College, Burwood Highway, Burwood. Details on how to get there are on the back cover of this newsletter. The dates of upcoming meetings are:

Sunday, February 17th at 2pm
Sunday, March 17th at 2pm
Sunday, April 21st at 2pm

Membership and Subscriptions

Membership of the Amiga Users Group is available for an annual fee of $25. To become a member of AUG, fill in the membership form in this issue (or a photocopy of it), and send it with a cheque or money order for $25 to: **Amiga Users Group, PO Box 48, Boronia, 3155**

Public Domain Software

Disks from our public domain library are available on quality 3.5" disks for $6 each including postage on AUG supplied disks, or $2 each on your own disks. The group currently holds over 300 volumes, mostly from the USA, with more on the way each month. Details of latest releases are printed in this newsletter, and a catalog disk is also available.

Member's Discounts

The Amiga Users Group negotiates discounts for its members on hardware, software and books. Currently, Technical Books in Swanston Street in the city offers AUG members a 10% discount on computer related books, as does McGills in Elizabeth Street. Kev's Computer Shops in Coburg and Prahran offer 10% off RR items. Master Systems of Bayswater offer good deals and MidiMouse offer 10% off all software.

Back Issues of Workbench

All back issues of Amiga Workbench are now available, for $2 each including postage. Note that there may be delays while issues are reprinted. Back issues are also available at meetings.

The Bulletin Boards

The Amiga Users Group operates two bulletin board systems devoted to the Amiga. The first is *Amiga Central* running on an Amiga 2000 running the Paragon software allowing multi-line conferencing facilities and the other system uses the MAXIMUS message and conferencing system - AmigaLink I, and is available 24 hours a day. Both can be accessed with a modem and appropriate communications software using any of the following speeds : 300 (V21), 1200 (v22), 1200/75 (v23) or 2400 baud (v22bis). Parameters should be set to 8 data bits, 1 stop bit and no parity.

Amiga Central: 376-3887, 376-7375, 376-6385
AmigaLink-I: 792-3918

Amiga Central and *AmigaLink-I* are part of a world-wide network of bulletin boards and we participate in national and international Amiga conferences. Both have selected Public Domain software available for downloading and we encourage the uploading of useful Public Domain programs for our users.

Production Credits

This month's newsletter was edited by Con Kolivas. Equipment and software used was: Amiga 500 with SIN500-2 memory board, Professional Page, Transcript, PIXmate, DigiView 4.0 , Apple Laserwriter NT and HP Laserjet

Contributions

Articles, papers, letters, drawings, cartoons and comments are actively sought for publication in Amiga Workbench. All contributions submitted for the purpose of publication that are printed in the newsletter are rewarded on the basis of one free public domain disk copy per column or half page printed with a minimum of one free copy. Contributions may be sent in on disk, paper or uploaded to Amiga Link or Amiga Link II in the area set aside for this purpose. Please send your contributions in text-only, non-formatted if they are on file and remember to include your address for return of disks and tokens for PD disks. Absolute deadline for articles is 23 days before the meeting date. Contributions can be sent to: **The Editor, AUG, PO box 684E, Melbourne 3001**.

Newsletter Advertising

The Amiga Users Group accepts commercial advertising in Amiga Workbench subject to the availability of space at these rates:

Quarter page $20
Half page $40
Full page $70
Double page spread: $120

These rates are for full-size camera-ready copy or Professional Page format only. We have no photographic or typesetting facilities. Absolute deadline for copy is 23 days before the meeting date. Send the copy and your cheque to: **The Editor, AUG, PO Box 684E, Melbourne 3001, Victoria.**

CONTENTS

Gaming

Game Review: Indianapolis 500 The Simulation

program by David Kaemmer and Richard Garcia distributed by Electronic Arts

As you may have gathered from the name, this is a simulation of racing at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, also known as 'The Brickyard; the proving ground for innovations in automobile technology since the invention of the car' (i.e., this is where the petrol-heads get together to run into each other without worrying about being pulled over). As far as detail goes, this program tops anything i've seen yet on a PC - the other cars are rendered in 3D-model format (which is to say that they are not merely 'cut-out' graphic shapes pasted onto the screen around you) as is the scenery around the track. The crowd is represented by a sea of little dots (although, realistically, if you're driving in the Indianapolis 500, you're not there to watch the crowd!), and it is possible to select three levels of 'scenery rendering'; low (which draws the track, the track walls, the pit row, the pole and of course, the other cars), medium (which adds partial grandstands and trees), and high (which adds fully drawn grandstands full of dots - sorry, spectators - and clouds overhead). This is to allow you to select either low realism for faster program response, or high realism to get the full effect of race driving.

The programmers are obviously devotees of automotive racing, as they include at least ten options you can alter to improve the performance of your car, from the obvious (you can reduce the weight of your car during qualifying laps by only half-filling your fuel tank) to the technical (the composition and various size and inflation combinations for your tyres). The program even allows for the changing grip characteristics of your car's tyres as they warm up during the race. you get a fairly wide view in front, and a somewhat less expansive view to the rear in two rear-view mirrors; while it isn't as bad as taxiing around in Flight Simulator II, it does suffer ever so slightly from the 'everything seems rather vertically squished' syndrome, in which recognising buildings and walls in the distance takes a bit of getting used to. This, however, is the only complaint i have about this program. The sound effects are excellent; from screeching tyres and the 'nnnyyyeeaarrrr' of cars passing you at 167 MPH, down to the tinkling of bits of metal falling off your car after you crash. The game comes in three stages; Practice, Qualify and Race, and while you can skip the first two, if you do you will be relegated to the back of the starting field. The better you do in the four qualifying laps, the closer to pole position you will be at the start. The race itself allows four variations: ten, thirty, sixty or two hundred (!) laps. The first two variations also exempt your car from sustaining damage in crashes, which means you can bounce off the track walls and the other drivers with impunity. This is important, because if you select either of these options, and spend the first laps running the other drivers off the track, by about lap four, you will have the field to yourself! All you have to do then is dodge the wrecks. If you involve yourself in a spectacular bingle, you can replay the last twenty seconds (if your Amiga has 512K or more of RAM), from six different angles, i.e. from the driver's seat; from behind your car; from fixed-position race cameras; from TV cameras atop the grandstands; from a helicopter and a TV view of either the race leader or the last crash. (Minor Technical Note: the 'View From Behind Car' is actually 'View From Your Car In The Direction That Everyone Else Should Be Coming From', i.e. if you decide to be an individual and go around the track clockwise, this view will actually present your car from the front.) Once you have wiped off the other drivers, completed your ten laps at whatever speed you like and won, you are treated to scenes from the victory celebration (including a winning driver that bears a striking resemblance to Grand Prix driver Nigel Mansell).

i didn't find it necessary to use the 'low scenery rendering' option, as the program ran with acceptable speed on my vanilla 2000. It loads in under thirty seconds, with a minimum of disk accesses, and is not copy-protected (so you can back it up with DiskCopy - i would also recommend that you use a boot-block saver like ZeroVirus to save the custom boot-block, in case of attack by the SCA virus or similar), although it appears to AmigaDOS as a blank disk, it can't be installed on a hard disk, and when starting, it asks you a question based on the photos of previous race winners in the back of the manual. Oh, yes, the manual - it's a wealth of information about the finer details of Indianapolis racing, such as adjusting the downforce provided by the wings, which affects the angle that the wheels sit on the road, which affects cornering performance and tyre wear, adjusting the anti-roll bars (although i haven't managed to roll the car yet - i'm working on that), levels of tyre inflation, etc. etc. It also lets you save and restore three configurations of car set-up, can use the keyboard, joystick or mouse (i prefer the joystick for general control and the numeric keypad for reversing), and one last point - you can boot from the disk (that is, you don't have to load WorkBench to run it). i'd give this program a B-plus, even an A-minus. $49.95 at Kev's Computer Shop (or if you're lucky, you can win it in the raffle at the NWAUG meeting like i did!)

nikolAI

Short Game Review

by Kelanie Camden

here's a short example of the sort of games you can find on Bulletin boards... this one's quite simple as far as the graphics goes... this was taken directly from our very own Amiga Central.

Enter the door you wish to open (Q to Quit): 13

Hi KELANIE CAMDEN, welcome to

* * * Russian Roulette v1.0 * * *   - Hugh Leslie 1990
(3:633/353)

Do you want instructions? (Y/n): Y

You are holding a six shot revolver to your head. In one chamber of the gun is a live round, but you don't know which one. It could be the first, it could be the last...

You are playing for high stakes - If you are brave enough to pull the trigger you could win extra time on this BBS - that is unless a live round blows your brains out. Each time you pull the trigger, your chances of dying are greater but you also stand to win more time - 5 minutes the first time, 10 minutes the second and so on. Of course if you pull the trigger five times and are still alive then the sixth WILL blow your brains all over the nearest wall.

GOOD LUCK....

*** PRESS ANY KEY ***

Your hands feel sweaty.
You can feel the cold barrel against your temple.
You're playing to increase your time by 5 minutes

Pull the trigger?(Y/N): Y

You squeeze the trigger.........Click.

KELANIE CAMDEN, you're time just went up by 5 minutes.

Your hands feel sweaty.
You can feel the cold barrel against your temple.
You're playing to increase your time by 10 minutes

Pull the trigger?(Y/N): Y

You squeeze the trigger.........Click.

KELANIE CAMDEN, you're time just went up by 10 minutes.

Your hands feel sweaty.
You can feel the cold barrel against your temple.
You're playing to increase your time by 15 minutes

Pull the trigger?(Y/N): Y

You squeeze the trigger.........B A N G !

Paragon BBS v2.07, (C) 1989,1990 by Jon Radoff and Eric Drewry.
Inner Circle Software, P.O. Box 486, Northborough, MA 01532
Support BBS: 508-393-3875

NO CARRIER

Reviews

A Review of the G.V.P. LAN

by A. Watson

There is a theory which states,that if you place several Amigas in a room with a good word processing package and a cup full of hot strong tea that eventually they will develop a script for Hamlet.

Well not quite, but what about doing just that with several Amigas in one room or one office. How would these computers(operators) communicate with each other? How could they share or transfer data and ideas?

There are several methods of transferring data between computers. Most involve moving media (disks, tapes or paper). Sometimes with devastating affects(Virus!!). What about a medialess office? The medialess office can exist these days if the methods of communications are electronic and not physical(disks).

The term LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN) springs to mind. A slow thud on the back of the head really, anyway. How easy is it to implement a LAN of Amigas?. GVP seem to have some of the answers in their ANET ethernet cards and supporting software.

I was given the opportunity to play with a couple of

these cards many thanks to Power Peripherals.

...Niv & Lex just a couple of guys , you know! ..

When you purchase these LAN cards you are supplied with the a full slot card, a rather non descript manual(being rewritten I believe), a thin ethernet cable terminator and a length of thin ethernet coax cable.

The installation into your amiga is very easy, just find an empty Amiga slot. Make sure the connectors on the board point out the back of your amiga. It becomes very difficult if they don't. Connect the coax cable to one of the two ports provided and the terminator to the other. Connect the other end of the coax to another Amiga and use the other terminator on it's free port. The physical LAN now exists between both amigas.

The software installation is also easy. Scripts copy all the necessary files onto the hard disk or floppy disk depending upon how you wish to run your LAN connection.

The configuration I connected together was as follows

Standard A2000
GVP seriesII 40mb HC
with 2Mb mem
Syquest 44mb CartDrive
GVP ANET card

to

A2000 - GVP030/28/4MB
GVP seriesII 40mb HC
8!up with 4mb
GVP ANET card
Syquest 44mb Cart.drv.

you can see once all the LAN configuration is done the available storage space and processing power increases.

The software provided enables the two amigas to share each others resources. Each amiga can access the others disks, can run CLI commands, and can send messages back and forth. Some of these features are not automatic and require you to modify ascii files. These files contain address and device information. When remote devices such as disks are mounted you get the normal icons on the workbench so that you can open and run most workbench software without to much problem. I ran SID and FALCON with out problems. Programs that require particular data or paths will look in your local amiga for them. If they are not available normal requestors will popup. What you are doing when you access a program across a LAN is loading and executing the program in your local memory. If your program is configurable you can specify the path across the LAN to store and retrieve data on the remote device.

What about performance?

... There is theory which states that, if anyone ever finds out how the IBM PC works or why it even exists that it will instantly turn into something creative and user friendly.

There is another theory which states that this has already happened....(The Amiga)

When accessing a remote disk across the LAN the access time would be comparable to a slow hard disk. I ran Diskspeed3.1 at both local amigas to the syquest drives and then across the LAN to each others syquest drive. There was a significant drop in the bytes/s figures when testing across the LAN. The transfer rate was about half the rate when testing the drive locally. This is not really a concern most LANs are similarly efficent. The transfer rate is much better than using serial comms to transfer data between machines.

... What came first Multimedia or the AMIGA? Guess!....

I like the GVP LAN, the software is easy to use and configure. The services available to the user are more than adequate for most applications. A LAN in the Amiga environment has many more benefits than that of conventional PC based LANs. Anyone using amigas for serious production should take a closer look at what these cards offer. If you have two or more Amigas and require to move large amounts data or programs between them. Then a LAN will prove to be an efficent solution. Saves copying lots of floppies.

... Eddies in the space time continuum and he wants to get out.....

I dont know where all those other comments came from i guess there must be wormholes in the workbench space time continuum.

My apology to Douglas Adams.

.....The meaning of life, the universe and everything, IBM PC + OS/2 + Window3 + MegaBucks = The Amiga - Megabucks.

Shareware software review:
MOSTRA, by Sebastiano Vigna
available on Fred Fish Disk #330 and the Amiga Central BBS

this is a picture viewer, along the same lines as DISPLAY and PPSHOW. it includes support for ALL current Amiga video modes; overscan, ham, extra-half-bright, even the new SHAM mode and, indirectly, Dynamic Hi-res mode (i say 'indirectly' because to view a pic in Dynamic HiRes mode, you will need NewTek's Dyna-Show somewhere in your path).

Mostra was written to fill the need for a viewer that will view different sorts of files, taking into account as many ideosyncracies of the various formats as possible. it is absolutely PACKED with features; the ability to fade pictures, accept wildcards for a filename (to generate a slideshow - this mode can even search subdirectories if required!), it can be made to work in 'doublebuffered' mode, which means that when you are showing more than one file, the preceeding file remains on screen until the next one is ready to be displayed... it will happily mix HAM, hires, and overscanned pictures in the same slideshow; cycling can be turned on or off; the screen can be centred (if you are displaying NTSC pictures on a PAL screen), you can force it to display the picture in a specified format, within reason (apparently, some early IFF picture files often lacked the CAMG hunk, which tells the Amiga what format the picture is in), you can even blank the mouse.

it will run from the workbench, and it can be told to use the ARP filerequester to get the filename to display. something i found very useful was the ability to view pictures bigger than the screen-size, as i have recently come into the posession of a lot of clip art that is often 2000 or more pixels across (by the way, did you know that DeluxePaint III, while supposedly having a page size limit of 1000x1000 pixels, will actually read these files? of course, when you do, it begins to act rather strangely, but it does read them, and even saves them afterwards). you can even change the priority that Mostra runs under, so that the IFF BODY chunk de-crunching operations don't interfere with your other tasks.

while the old standard, DISPLAY, is 14700 bytes long, Mostra (or as it is sometimes known, 'M') is only 14256 bytes long, and it does more... of course, there is no such thing as a perfect program, and of course, i managed to find something to whinge about... i haven't worked out the algorithm that Mostra uses to display a bunch of files if invoked with a wildcard (although it seems to be either the order in which the files were placed on the disk, or reverse-alphabetic order)... if you

absolutely need to display a series of pictures in a certain order, you can specify their names on the command line:

mostra Pic.1 Pic.2 Pic.3 Pic.4 (etc...)

but if your'e running this from a batch file (and face it, who's going to sit down and type in a hundred or so filenames for a slideshow?), then you are limited to whatever filenames you can get onto one line in the batch file, which is 255 characters. if there is anyone out there who has access to BIX, could you please send Mr Vigna some mail (BIX: svigna) and ask him to allow inclusion of a file full of picture filenames? thanks.

nikolai
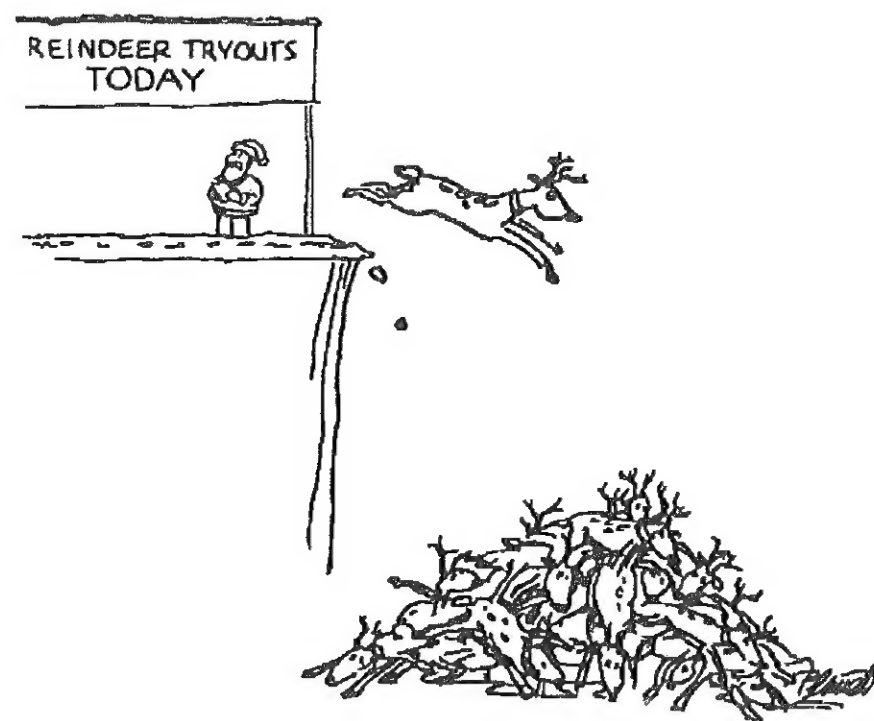
WHAT'S BIG AND HARD...?

I have finally bought a hard disk for my Great Aunt Amiga 1000. It took a long time because the expansion bus on the side of Great Aunt, where most hard disk interfaces like to nestle, has been suckling a 2 megabyte RAM expansion for some considerable time (with no sign of weaning it.) That in itself wouldn't have been a problem but the memory expansion didn't pass the bus through and there are precious few Amiga 1000 hard disks around that I could choose from. I knew the answer the same moment I saw the ad in AmigaWorld for the Tiny Tiger 45 megabyte drive that connected to any Amiga (1000/500/2000) through the parallel port via a SCSI interface supplied with the drive. Fortunately the manufacturers, Memory and Storage Technologies (MAST) had a distributor in Sydney and

after a few pertinent probing questions I ordered one for just over $1000 and waited.

The drive arrived and I plugged the proprietary SCSI interface into the Amiga's printer port. The printer cable (one must use a standard IBM printer cable between the SCSI port and the printer. The Amiga 1000 printer cable is the wrong sex at the computer end and, MAST warns, will fry the SCSI interface. I took their word for this.) The man at MAST assured me the drive would not be formatted, but it was. It was preloaded with a copy of the boot disk supplied with the drive. That's all that can be said for the software supplied. There were no useful hard disk utilities supplied: it was just a cut-down copy of a WorkBench disk. Not really exciting, I thought. At least a head parking utility or a backup tool would have been nice. Oh well...

I set the drive's dip switches as described in the photocopied documentation (another sparce source of intellectual comfort: there were no technical specs given about the drive, not even a suggestion about its average access time or details of the parameters in the mountlist.) I plugged the drive into the SCSI inteface, poured a comforting glass of claret and booted the computer. This was when the fun started.

To cut a long story short, I immediately reformatted the drive (after unsuccessfully snooping about for any useful freebies) because I didn't want any viruses coming in through the back door, repartitioned the drive to provide a couple of nicely chubby logical devices and started tossing my custom Workbench (with ARP and other vital system-enhancers) onto it. The drive sucked up data like it was in a magnetic feeding frenzy. Wordperfect got sucked in, the Extras disk got digested, a couple of megabytes of manuscripts went in closely followed by assorted games, megabytes of BASIC code, interpreters and compilers, a game or two, a few communications packages and assorted bits and pieces. I modified my startup sequence files to accommodate mounting the hard disk and gleefully rebooted. It took two minutes to mount. It then took five minutes to open a directory. This didn't look right. I thought hard disks were supposed to be FAST.

Twelve hours elapsed during which time I consumed an unhealthy amount of comforting claret, rang MAST (whose sympathetic and knowledgeable techy said he hadn't heard of such problems before but offered to check the hardware if I sent it back), moved files to and fro in every conceivable permutation and combination, rewrote the hard drive mountlist 14 times, completely reformatted and repartitioned the drive and uttered oaths the Spanish Inquisition would have burnt me alive for. Another twelve hours elapsed. Fortunately this was a weekend and I didn't really feel like sleeping anyway. I did feel like murdering the fool who invented computers in the first place. Finally, as usually happens with me, I

turned off the machine in disgust and sat down to watch RAGE and think. That didn't help. I couldn't understand why mounting and reading directories could be so painfully s..l..o..w - but only sometimes. Half the time it mounted instantaneously and read some directories in a flash. Other times the drive light went on and it then seemed to go into fairyland for up to 20 minutes before I lost patience and rebooted (NOT a good idea when the drive light is on, but after waiting so long I couldn't give a .... that's strange: the Wordpercect thesaurus doesn't have a clean synonym for the word I wanted to use! Maybe I should use Excellence! after all, Con!)

OK. I had possibilities about the source of the problem. Software: maybe ARP or one of my many multitasking utilities was conflicting with the drive. I booted with a stock-standard Workbench 1.3 disk. No good. It could be the SCSI interface. I posted it back to MAST and it received a clean bill of health. The drive could be faulty, but I wasn't up to paying to send that to Sydney just yet. The only alternative as old Great Aunt herself. Memory problems are associated with old age (she's over 5 years old now!) I was arranging to borrow another Amiga from someone (not too easy in Swan Hill) to see if Great Aunt was to blame but things started to go right.

Browsing through some directories on the hard drive, I casually deleted a disk.info file that had been copied to the hard drive from the source floppy. For some reason that directory loaded instantly next time. I ran Whereis (from some Fish disk or other) to find other disk.info files anywhere on the hard drive. I deleted those and suddenly the drive was responding more like a hard drive was supposed to behave. It was FAST. It didn't go into fairyland when clicking on a drawer. Things looked good.

Things aren't perfect yet though. For some reason Wordperfect is being difficult when I run it from the hard drive. It's a long story (that I just typed and deleted when I realised how long it was.) Basically, the drive refuses to read wp.library anywhere from a floppy disk or ram disk, even when the necessary ASSIGNS have been carefully made. I discovered wp.library was the offending file by running SNOOPDOS from a recent Fish disk (I got it from Amigalink via modem). SNOOPDOS announces all files (and even environmental variables the system is trying to find, load or execute. It's VERY handy in cases like these. I have tried a hundred fixes without success. Any clues, anyone?

Similarly, Excellence! also won't load properly from the hard drive. It goes into fairyland too, with the drive trying to read it forever without success. Could there be problems with the drive trying to read LARGE files? Other big files like GFA BASIC loads nicely though. I

think I remember that library files are loaded differently to other files. Could that be at fault? I'll nut it out in the end, I suspect. The metal drive casing also gets very hot, especially after a hard workout on a Swan Hill scorcher of a day. The Tiny Tiger has no fan and I wonder whether excessive heat may cause read problems if the platters may be expanding. Who knows?

That's the story of the Tiny Tiger. The fact that it connects to ANY Amiga - Great Aunt 1000, Dad 2000 and Little Brother 500 - is attractive. If I upgrade to another model (the 3000? Have you seen the prices of them??!!) it's nice to know I can tear the Tiger from Aunt's wizened breast and attach it to the new machine. In fact the drive can be mated to ANY machine with a SCSI interface - IBM, Mac or whatever. This drive is a bit of a floozy, I feel. For about $1000 I can't find a better deal for a 45 meg drive complete with controller, power supply and all cables. By the way, a word of advice when shopping for a hard drive: 20 megs may sound big compared to an 880K floppy but it will be full before your disk-poking arm even gets warmed up. You'd be better to get a larger drive at the start. You'd be surprised how many megabytes you've got stowed away in your little floppy box.)

It looks like Great Aunt Amy has got a few meditations left in her. She is now supporting a family comprising an external floppy drive, a modem, 2 Megabyte RAM expansion and now a fat Tiger cub and they're all thriving. Still, at my back I hear the clamouring cries of the MS-DOS world with 80386 processors, Windows, laptops and CHEAP prices. I'm awfully tempted: I admit it. Let's see if Commodore can do something sensible with A3000 pricing and I may stay with the Amigoid clan.

How many people who bought one of those "other" computers actually found a use for it?
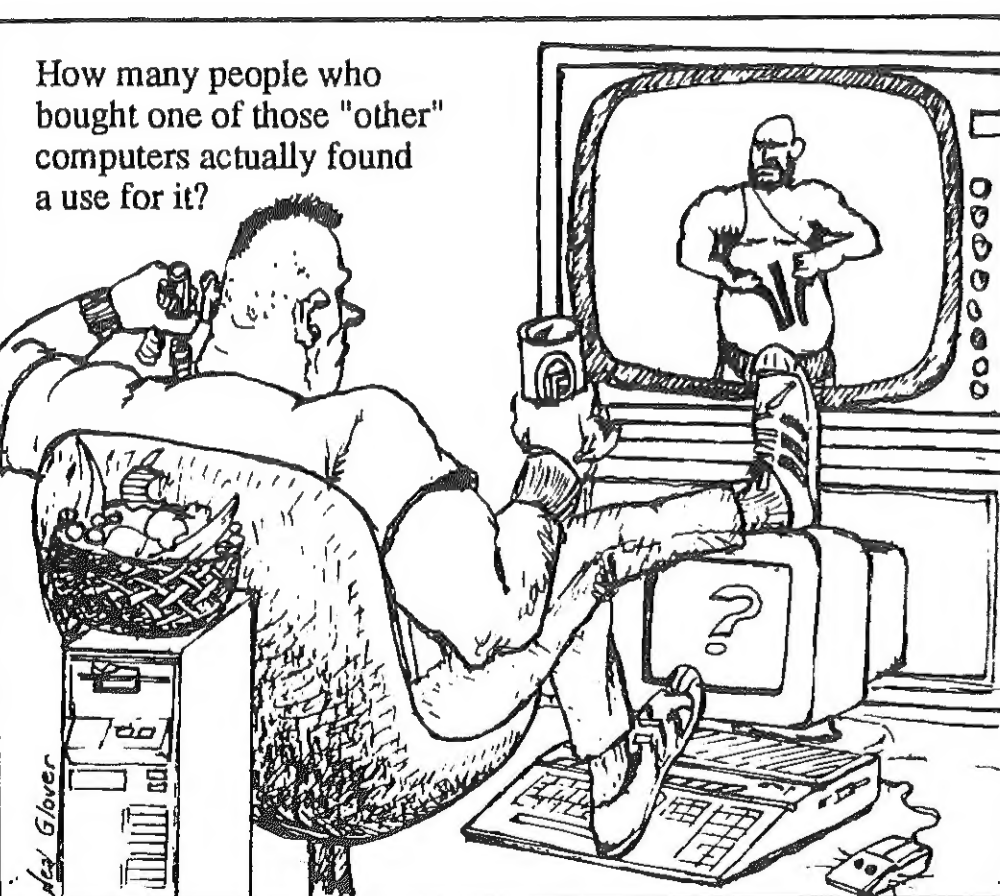
Hints & Tips

AMIGA 500 1 MEG CHIP RAM USING THE A501 EXPANSION BOARD

By Scott Le Brun

Like most Amiga 500 users I bought an A501 memory expansion to upgrade my Amiga to 1M RAM. At that stage everything was well and fine until the new Fat Agnus chip came along allowing owners of the new chip access to 1Meg of chip RAM. Well I just had to have one of these, so I sold my old Amiga 500 for the model with the Fatter Agnus installed, although I later found out that there was no need to do this as the new chip can be readily purchased and installed. But aside from this I was told that to use the New Agnus I had to solder extra RAM chips onto the main board and to throw away my A501 as they occupy the same memory addresses or do some major surgery consisting of adding extra decoding chips to address the A501 to a new position. Although being an Electronic Technician by trade, this was just a bit too much.

Then whilst reading through Workbench August '89. I found an article on p16 which was exactly what I wanted, although a bit hard to understand. After several attempts and quite alot of hair being pulled out in frustration, I managed to get the thing to work.

Here's what to do:

Turn your Amiga upside down and remove the screws to allow the top to come free. Remove the Keyboard connector remembering which way it goes on. Now remove the RF shield.

There are only two jumper pads which we need to modify. These are JP2 and JP7A.

JP7A can be found right next to your A501 expansion port. JP7A consists of three pads. The centre pad is connected by a small track to the front pad. Cut this track using a sharp blade. This is all that is necessary for this jumper.

JP2 can be found in between the 68000 CPU and the Crystal labeled OSC on the board behind the ROM chip.

JP2 consists of three pads of which the centre pad is connected to the front pad. Again cut this track but this

time solder the centre pad to the back pad.

That's all there is to it. Alternatively you can install a Double Pole/Double Throw toggle switch to switch from 1M Chip to 512K Chip/512K Fast RAM.

Use a program such as ScreenX or JpDir that tells your memory configuration, to check to see if your mods have worked or not.

This modification should work for all models after Rev 4, if you've installed the new Fat Agnus. Since I've only tried this on my Rev 6 board, I can't be sure of this.

Amiga Video to Sony TV (or: The BIG Picture)

by Lee Fong

You've got friends coming over, and you want to entertain them with your Amiga wonder machine. You want to stun them with 4096 colours bursting out of the screen and stereo sound pounding out of hi-fi speakers.

Unfortunately, you bought a 1084 mono monitor, with a non-reflective screen (i.e. good for programming, but a dog for games). The solution? Wheel in the family TV and plug in the Amiga.

But before you scream "A modulated screen looks bloody awful!", let me tell you that Unreal looks and sounds very nice on my 21" Sony Black Trinitron. The reason is the very handy SCART socket on the back. This socket is found on the old Phillips brand Amiga monitors, and on most of the newer TVs (it is meant for S-VHS). Using it, you can connect your Amiga direct to the TV without using the dreaded modulator.

If you want a superbly bright, high resolution image even BETTER than a 1084 you can't go past a Sony Black Trinitron. The picture produced cannot be surpassed by any other TV on the market (although it is equalled by some of the more expensive European brands). The sound quality is more than adequate for most, and insatiable audiophiles would have their own speakers ready anyway.

Having a Sony myself (we bought it with the intention of connecting it to the Amiga), I will deal with the problems I faced. You would be hard pressed to find an "Amiga to Sony" cable, so the only alternative is to make your own (so take out the soldering iron!). What we did first was buy a spare "Amiga to Phillips" cable from Kev's Computer Shop. The "Phillips" referred to is the old Phillips Amiga Monitor. The cable should

have a 23 pin d-plug on one end and a SCART plug (also called 21-pin CENELEC standard connector) on the other.

A quick plug at this stage for Kev's. They deal in Commodore equipment and have two shops, one in Coburg and one in Prahran. They offer the best customer service I have ever found. We bought our Amiga 500 from them, unfortunately with a faulty disk-drive. We returned and got a replacement immediately, with no hassle at all. The staff I met were genuinely interested in all things Commodore, and will happily and knowledgably answer all questions. They have no objection to you "trying before you buy" and with even open shrink wrapped packages for you to try, plus they offer a 10% software discount to all AUG members. I've only been to Busi-Soft once, but they seem pretty good too. I have a nasty story to tell about Microlab...

But back to the article proper; Clutching the cable in my sweaty little fingers, I rushed home, ritually burned the mono cable we had been using and connected everything up. AAAARGH!!!! We got no picture at all, just a black screen, although if you turned up the contrast and brightness to maximum, you could just see a grey shadow. We did not have any idea what was wrong, so we rang up Charlie's Computer Workshop and Sony's technical department (both of whom were very helpful). We discovered that one pin needed 3V through it, which meant we had to remake the cable.

We would have had to do it anyway cos the cable was only 3 feet long and at the distance it wouldn't have been long before we burned out our retinas (and been rendered impotent) in front of a 21" screen. At that time I was a real klutz at soldering. I had previously tried to solder together 3 electronic kits and ended up with 3 amorphous lumps of non-functioning metal. But this turned out to be a breeze (no nasty transistors to overheat) and in no time at all we had a beautiful full colour image on the TV and pulsating stereo to match.

To make your own cable you will need a 23 pin connector, a 21-pin SCART connector, two RCA plugs and as much connecting cable as you like (I used 3 metres of shielded 16-way cable). Be warned; 23 pin connectors are as rare as intelligent Macintosh owners. I rang about 15-20 component suppliers and only one stocked them (can't remember which one it was, so don't ask).

The following pin lay out is as standard for a Phillips to Amiga cable, and should therefore work for all Phillips TVs (and probably most other brands too).

The notation will be; Amiga 23 Pin Connector Pin#,Description
-> SCART Pin#,Description (as in Sony manual).

3, Analog Red   -> 15, Red Input
4, Analog Green   -> 11, Green/Green with sync input
5, Analog Blue   -> 7, Blue input
10, Composite Sync -> 20, Video input
22, +12 Volts power -> 8, Function select (AV control)

and a lead going from the 23 pin casing (shielding) to SCART pin number 17 (Ground, video input).

For sound, you have to wire up two RCA sockets, one to SCART pin 2 (Audio input B right) and one to SCART pin 6 (Audio input A left). The RCA plugs go straight into the Amiga RCA socket sound outputs. The RCA plugs will look a bit messy hanging out of the 23 pin connector casing, but at least it works. The grounds for the RCA plugs can be soldered to SCART pin 4 (Ground, audio). Note: I accidentally soldered the audio grounds to SCART pin 17 (Ground, video input), which also seems to work.

For Sony users ONLY (as far as I know, anyway):
23, +5 Volts power -> 16, Blanking input (Ys signal)

If you're unsure about the above, PLEASE consult your Amiga and TV manual first. The pin numbers should be labelled on both of the connectors. If not, refer back to the manuals. When you do it, it would be a good idea to double check all connections yourself, and then get someone else to check it too, BEFORE your use it. Be especially careful with pins 22 and 23, the power outputs on the 23-pin connector . If you're still not 100% sure the connections as I have listed them are correct, ring up your TV's manufacturer and get confirmation from them.

I have checked all of the above connections on my own (working!) cable with a multimeter continuity test.

It should work (it does for me) and when it does, you're all set to impress the hell out of your friends!

A final word; if you are going to buy a TV, make sure it has a SCART input. It does not have to be a Sony (you can buy a lot of computer equipment with that kind of money) but at the very least you will have a back-up to your 1084.

DISCLAIMER : (for the nasty little bastards out there) If you make this cable and it melts, blows up or otherwise damages you and your TV it is your own bloody fault and I am in no way responsible (you did not have to build it).

The disclaimer is there for legal reasons only; I think it works and it does for me. But if you are not sure of the instructions or your ability to follow them, DON'T EVEN START.

This article is not to be considered approved or supported by the Amiga Users Group Inc in any way, shape or form.

[Ed's note - that's what I was going to say]

Intuition Bug

Described by Alexander McCooke

Several months ago I found my Amiga would sometimes crash when switching between screens in interlace mode. I thought that it might be something wrong with my Amiga 2000 (with Super Agnus), but the same problem occurred on the dealer's 500 and later I found a patch for it on one of the BBSs. I was surprised to have seen no information published locally, prior to seeing the patch, about what I consider to be a serious bug, (although it has apparently been described on BIX in America) so I decided to write a description here.

The problem occurs if two interlaced screens are open and then one opens a non-interlaced screen in front. It can be created using the following steps:

1. Start with an interlaced screen, either the Workbench in interlaced mode or some application.
2. At the Workbench, open a program that uses an interlaced screen, eg. DPaint III in Hi-Res.
3. Return to the Workbench (using front/back gadgets) and open a non-interlaced screen
4. Now cycle through the screens with front/back gadgets until you reach the second interlaced screen

Only the TOP HALF is displayed NOT IN INTERLACE MODE or the computer may crash or display garbage. You will be lucky to get out of this without the computer crashing, if it has not crashed already!

The solution is a program called FIXINTUITION which I found on one of the BBS's in Melbourne (sorry forgot which one), it is run in the Startup-Sequence.

With more people using display enhancers/flicker fixers with interlaced screens, I feel this is quite a nasty bug.

AUGADS

For Sale:

DRAGON'S LAIR (6 disks) complete with manuals, registration etc. .... $30.   Ring Lu on 822 2327

CSA Midget Racer 68020/-----
2Mb of 1 megabit RAM (16 chips)
Best Offer. Phone Tim (052) 26-7305 BH or (052) 55-4788 AH

Notices:

John Herten (New AUG Member) would like to get in contact with members in the Peninsula area with a view to forming a Peninsula regional group. He comes from Crib Point and can be contacted on (059) 83 6224.

Peter Stanski would like to get in contact with anyone interested in getting a group together to explore machine code programming on the Amiga. His number is 793 1793 (Dandenong)

Charlie Davis is using Bars & Pipes with a Kawai K4 synthesizer and is wondering if there is anyone with similar equipment who might like to compare notes (pun intended). He can be contacted at work on 819-8806 most afternoons.

Letters to the editor

Amigas Mean Business

by Rudy Kohut

I have been reading the December issue of Workbench and come across the unsigned letter to the editor titled "The Sad Demise of the Amiga". I have read similar letters to other magazines from frustrated Amiga owners who lament, among other things, the lack of "serious packages in the area of small computer usage (WP, spreadsheet, and database)".

I don't know whether the author means small business usage or just "little" computers but I'll assume the former. The type of software used by small businesses varies greatly in terms of cost and performance, even in the MS-Dos world. There is no such thing as a "standard" set of software for small business. The packages which are usually touted as being the "standard" against which the Amiga software must be judged are things like "WordPerfect V5.1" or "Dbase IV" or "Lotus 123 V3.1". These packages are not the ones that small businesses usually own and use, unless they meet a particular professional need. These "best selling" packages find their market in the large corporations which buy in bulk and which get networkable versions. This does not mean that they are not used by small business - only that their cost and their steep learning curves, which are related to their complexity, have prompted small businesses to find other, cheaper, packages. Hence the great variety of packages available to do those three primary tasks.

Now, compared to the bulk of the MS-Dos software available, the Amiga stuff looks quite good. Sure, WordPerfect Amiga is not as good as the MS-Dos version (yet), but it is better than other IBM packages such as MultiMate V4, which is also a "top" seller. And yes, Microsoft WORD is the best word processing package on the Macintosh and is better than Amiga packages - but Excellence V2.0 is coming close, and ProWrite V3.1 is also of professional standard. Those two Amiga packages alone are better than the bulk of word processing packages on IBM's.

Databases? Superbase Pro and DataRetrieve Pro would more than meet the needs of small and large business users alike. Other Amiga packages would also suit small business users (eg. Microfiche Filer), and if a pure Dbase III clone is required then DBMan V5 is just the ticket!

Spreadsheets? Here again, we concede that there is

nothing to match Excel or Lotus 123 V3. But think again about how much the sophistication of those packages are used and by whom. For the average small business, the Amiga packages are perfect - easy to use with extensive features. MaxiPlan (or Plan/IT V3 as it is also called) is a powerful spreadsheet with an excellent Macro language (similar to Excel's) and charting functions which were unknown on Lotus 123 until their latest version came out. (MaxiPlan does suffer from some bugs in its charting functions which is a pity because the rest of the program is excellent). Gold Disk's new "Advantage" spreadsheet and the older "Analyze" are also worthy contenders for small business users.

Small businesses sometimes require that something extra, especially if they are into presentation for "image" or "marketing" purposes. On the desktop publishing front, Professional Page and Pagestream easily match the IBM and Mac packages that are less capable than Ventura and Pagemaker - and exceed them in some respects eg. colour page separations. (The new Saxon Publisher looks like being the equal of Pagemaker). Does every small business use Ventura? I think not! Cost and complexity alone are factors, as in the high end word processing packages.

We can go through other categories as well - paint programs (eg. DigiPaint); 2D and 3D drawing programs (eg. ProDraw); Computer Aided Design (eg. X-Cad Professional); business statistics (eg. Lionheart Software); accountancy (eg. Sybiz software). In each case the Amiga software is very good, sometimes the best, and very suitable for small businesses with cost and productivity factors to consider.

Surely the appeal of the Amiga to small business is in its ease of use and its low cost yet highly productive software. As the Amiga user base widens, the high cost packages may eventually get ported over, and then presumably everyone will be happy! Until then, I would suggest that not all business problems are solved by buying "the biggest and best" programs, but rather by buying the "appropriate" programs running on the "best" computer. That may or may not be an Amiga solution - but on the face of it there is no reason why not.

The article that prompted me to write this also talks about "a system that gets flakier the more you extend it". I am not quite sure what "flakier" means, but it appears to be a reference to certain programs not multi-tasking well together even with expanded memory on an A1000. I have an A500 with 1Mg CHIP ram and 2Mgs of FAST ram. I can run ProWrite, Fusion Paint and Plan/IT together easily with other background processes also running (eg. FaccII). These programs have been designed to indicate low memory problems, if I get to that point, and clean up very well after themselves (when windows are closed for example).

Other programs, eg. KindWords, crash constantly with other processes running. The moral of the story? Try before you buy! That goes for any computer. In fact, the very programs that we lament not having on the Amiga have been known to be so sophisticated that serious bugs have been hard to remedy. As a seasoned Macintosh user, I can attest to the number of system crashes caused by "first rate" programs (eg. Pagemaker) as being quite high. The problems experienced by DBase IV on the IBM in its first release version are legendary. And these problems occur on machines that don't multitask!

I hope I haven't fallen into the trap of seeming defensive about the Amiga, because I believe that the Amiga isn't for everyone or for every problem. But I think that its potential for general use is larger than given credit for due to a mistaken belief that all users require the same solution to their problems. There is also a lack of appreciation of the quality of Amiga software, compared to MSDos software, based on a false set of initial assumptions about the problem set being addressed. I hope the discussion above helps to clarify this matter.

[Ed's note - I think there really only remains one class of programs untouched by this subject, and it is in my opinion probably where the Amiga doesn't shine, but is far ahead of anything else and is setting the pace. That is, the area of forefront computer usage. I don't know if you understand what I mean by that term, but it basically refers to programs such as animation, modelling, ray-tracing, sound and video digitizing and so-on, which are really only just becoming part of the computer world. But then, not everyone has a use for these, although it is a 'new' way of easing the boredom for people on their computer besides just playing games, as surely people would prefer to use their computer as a hobby as well as for serious work!]

Further Coments on the Boing! Mouse

By Alexander McCooke

I would like to make a few further comments about the Boing! mouse after my review published in the November 1990 Workbench (written over six months ago). Having used an optical mouse for some time now, I would probably not now go back to a mechanical one. It does however have a couple of problems as I mentioned in the review (possibly these may now have been fixed).

My Mother also wants to make some comments: "Now that I have used Boing! mouse regularly, I feel the original review was unfair to it. I do have a lot of

trouble clicking accurately with a mouse, this goes for Macs as well as Amigas, and the optical mouse is the first one I have had no trouble with." - Annabel McCooke

I have now found a good use for the middle button. MachII (version 2.6) allows it to be used as a SHIFT key. This means I can shift click on icons with one hand!

When I mentioned a cordless mouse in the review I meant *a* cordless mouse, not a specific product, having not used one ... the one available in Australia does not work very well (see SCRAMBLES, December 1990 and ACAR's Profesional Amiga User, July 1990). What I would really like is a good cordless optical mouse!

Club meetings.

Hi, my name is Garry Purcell.

Being the proud owner of an Amiga 500 for approximately three months, I quickly came to the conclusion I needed help getting started in the world of programming. All that had to be done was join a computer club and I'd be up and running So simple I should have thought of it earlier.

With the use of that marvellous invention at my disposal, " The telephone book," all that had to be done is look under the appropriate section and dial an Amiga user club, nothing to it, or so I thought! It would seem that there are no clubs for computers listed in the " Let the fingers do the walking" masterpiece. Back to the drawing board again.

Feeling a bit depressed I went to the local newsagent and bought the AMIGA Annual 1990 and was pleasantly surprised to see user groups listed. So to the phone I go and dial and dial and dial (Me thinks this numbers popular) eventually I get through only to savour the melodic tones of a modem connected bulletin board, well at least I assume thats what it was, anyway it's not much use to me (As I ain't got modem yet).

I'm beginning to think that the powers to be, have something against me ever finding let alone joining a club. Again I hunt through magazines and eventually find another one with an address (I hope) that can be used. So I sharpen the pencil and get stuck into a short letter asking where the next meeting is to held so that I might attend. Time goes on and no written reply to my letter,(Must be no meetings this month me thinks) to my surprise I get a phone call from a chap called Neil informing me of a general meeting the next day at Burwood State College. Not much warning but what the heck it's contact with other users, Sunday arrives and

off I go to have a look see, only to find on arrival the doors to Lecture Theatre 1 are closed and no one seems to have the key (Great start, The Gods are laughing again me thinks) then someone says that the meeting is to be transferred to a nearby hall. So of we all trot to this secretive meeting of fellow Amiga users. The general meeting gets underway, apologies given for the slight problem earlier on, then question and answer time comes with experienced members attempting to solve problems for other users with less experience (Great stuff me thinks, the true colours of the club shoing through) After this the meeting was broken down into smaller group sections so that whatever your interest is it was catered for. As for me I sat in on the beginners group and learnt a few things I thought I knew. All the persons who took time to make this meeting work under such difficult conditions my hats off to you. As for me, my troubles have been well rewarded and I am looking forward to the next meeting.

P.S. I signed up after the meeting

Letter to the group from Fred Fish:

This letter is going out to all direct disk recipients who have received any disk number greater than 390 to alert you to the possibility of a problem with disk 395. It appears that the Dragon Cave game uses graphics images that were illegally ripped out of the commercial Dragon Master game owned and distributed by FTL Games and incorporated into the Dragon Cave game. Having never seen Dragon Master, I did not know at the time that the material was included in the library.

I have sent a copy of the disk to FTL Games for their review and to get a statement as the whether or not they consider this an infringement of their copyrights. Until this matter is cleared up, I am suspending shipments of this disk and would like to ask that everyone else with a copy do likewise.

Since this is the only material on the disk, if the final determination is that it cannot be distributed, then the disk will be permanently removed from the library and no replacement issued. At that time, you can return the original disk for credit or replacement with another disk from the library.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Fred Fish
17/Nov/90

WORKBENCH
LETTER TO THE EDITOR (19/1/91)

LIES & WHISPERS

In response to the anonymous "sad demise" letter (Workbench 12/90), the observation regarding the dearth of "quality" Amiga magazines just ain't true in my corner of town.

A recent perusal through my local newsagent's racks revealed the following mastheads -

From USA :Amazing, Info, AmigaWorld, Compute!(Resource), Amiga Plus.
From Canada :Graphix, Amiga Computing (Can).
From UK :Amiga Format, Amiga Action, Amiga User International (recently revived), Zzap, Comm User, Amiga Computing (UK), Zzap, Comm User, Amiga Fun, Your Amiga.
From Aust :ACAR, Pro Amiga User, (why not Workbench?)

- and these are just half a mile away - (for those interested it's the Koonang Road newsagency in Carnegie).

Add to these the coverage in the more general 16-bit mags, and the occasional pieces in Byte, APC etc. and it becomes obvious someone must be reading (and presumably purchasing) them!

Having followed Transactor Magazine all the way from its early Vic20/C64 days I was sad to see it finally go down for the count. But for every Transactor, Robo City News and Ahoy's Amiga User, there seems to be a new title to take its place.
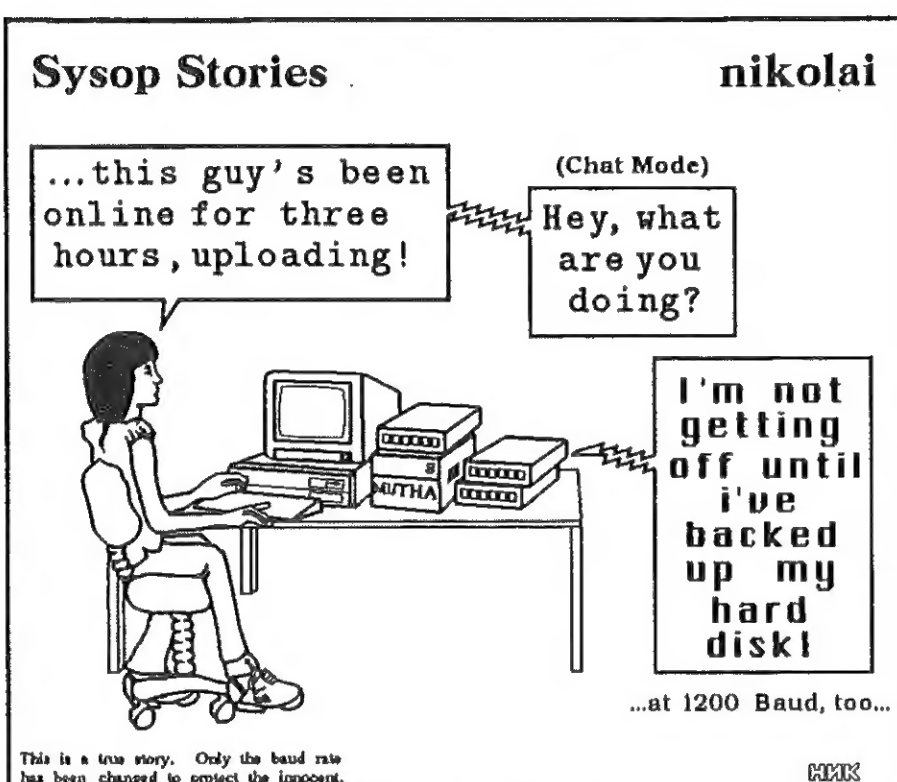
Info (my favourite) is now monthly, and both veteran mags AmigaWorld and Amazing have announced new publications for '91 to be aimed at the professional user.

Indeed it would appear that the market is not so much diminishing, but fragmenting into SIG areas ie. games, DTP, graphics, tech programming etc, - thus mirroring the many faces of this computer.

The above preamble leads me to onto one of the great lies of computer usage - the creation of the paperless office. I don't know about anybody else, but my hardware is continually hidden by magazines, books, manuals, manuscripts, paper, paper and more bloody paper!

Has anyone got a bright idea about what to do with excess tractor feed edges now that the need for xmas decorations has passed??

ROB PEMBERTON

Sysop Stories   nikolai

...this guy's been online for three hours, uploading!

(Chat Mode)
Hey, what are you doing?

I'm not getting off until i've backed up my hard disk!

...at 1200 Baud, too...

This is a true story. Only the baud rate has been changed to protect the innocent.

Club News

REPORT ON ART SIG.

The 9th in the series of monthly ART SIGs which commenced last June was held on Tuesday evening 22nd January, at Norm Christian's home in Keysborough. Despite the fact that for the first time ever, ALL members would have been aware of this, only 11 were present and most of these were "regulars" from previous meetings.

Several art and animation programs were demonstrated and discussed and members' works were shown. It speaks well for the interest of those participating that there was unanimous agreement to continue the series, and next meeting will be at the same venue on - - -

TUESDAY EVENING 19TH FEBRUARY AT 7.30 PM.

Please make a diary note to phone Norm on 798-6552 if interested.

We were hoping to see a number of new faces - hopefully this will happen in future. If you decide to join us, it's not a bad idea to bring a folding chair if you have one, otherwise you might have to sit on the floor.

It would be good if we could attract some new blood, so please, if you are a user of art programs or wish to learn about them, or display your work, we would like to hear from you - also if you have anything which you would like to submit for inclusion in the next AUGDisk. Now that you have all seen what can be done with a disk-based magazine, perhaps you will have some ideas to put forward.

Although IFF files which are not too large are ideal material, AUGDisk #3 will consider ANYTHING which does not compete with the printed Workbench; i.e. "stand alone" articles should continue to be submitted to Workbench. The only text files suitable for the disk will be those which are supplementary to pictures or programs.

MUSIC SIG.

Despite previous publicity, there has been very little feedback from the proposal to form a new Music SIG. If you are a user of any music programs, or have produced any interesting files, and/or have a MIDI studio set-up, you are an obvious candidate and should phone Norm on 798-6552 to discuss plans. All input and suggestions will be welcome. A MIDI studio is available and you are welcome to bring hardware and/or software. Don't worry if you are only a beginner, as more advanced members are only too happy to share their knowledge with you.

Workbench SIG

Last month, at the main meeting, there was a small meeting of the members of the Workbench editorial sub-committee and myself (the editor). By small I mean Nikolai Kingsley and Rob Pemberton besides myself. The main thrust of the meeting was to decide directions for the Workbench newsletter. We discussed how, to make the newsletter more appealing to non-members and members alike, it would have to have a more professional look, more like a magazine if that is what the public wants. To do this, the newsletter would require a character of it's own, something professional-looking, but instantly recognizable as the newsletter of the Amiga Users Group.

Basically what happened was a fair description by each person was given as to what they thought would add to that image. You see we (the committee) believe that the content is at least as good as any publication out there, and the only thing making the newsletter not look like a magazine was really it's own image. What we decided on was a number of changes, non hard and final, but far better than before. As you can see, there have been some large but essentially superficial changes already, mainly the addition of window-like pages (Kickstart 2.0 windows) and the re-formatting of the information page, the help-network page and the addition of a contents listing on page 1.

Next month at the main meeting we will meet again, hopefully with a better turnout due to the added time of notice. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Coordinators Comment

This is going to be a big year for the AUG and the future looks busy.

I hope you all received the "Workbench on disk" in the January mail. If you didn't (and should have) or you received a disk that doesn't seem to work, we will replace it for you. Some disks were inadvertently sent out blank, others cannot be read by some individual's disk drives because the head alignment between the drive that wrote the disk and the drive that is reading the disk is just slightly different.

It was a BIG job to put the disk together and send it out and we have to thank Hugh Leslie for a lot of it. I'd also like to thank all those selfless individuals who gave up one Saturday to spend it in front of a screen, watching XCOPY, Diskcopy or DFC counting up the tracks.

Nonetheless, we enjoyed ourselves and made the best of it with a BBQ and told Amiga tales to quell the boredom. Hugh tested the disk on stock machines and it worked on the A1000, A500 and B2000. It didn't work on the A2000 we had at the copying session and I'm told by the President of the New Zealand Amiga Users Group that it doesn't seem work on an A3000.

At the February meeting, there will be some examples of very professionally executed animations done on the Amiga by some of the team from the Swinburne Film and Television School. I was fortunate enough to be invited along to see the work of the Graduate Diploma animation students at 'Animation 90' in December and I was so impressed I had to invite them to show their stuff to a wider audience. Gordon Reid has done some AMAZING animations on the Amiga and will be at the February meeting to show us and hopefully, give us a glimpse of how he did it.

Also at the meeting (hopefully) will be a demonstration of a Video Grabber that allows you to capture composite video images to colour hard copy.

The Amiga Survival Kit is out and will be given to all new members when they join for the first time. We will be expanding the Kit in the future with more information, more discounters and services. We'd like to hear from you if you think it could be improved in any way; are there any inadequacies, anything else you'd like to see included. You may have a brilliant idea, don't keep it to yourself.

Soon we will be gearing up for PC-91 at the Exhibition Buildings August 11-14. The last few years has been a dismal failure for the Amiga presence at the show and (cost permitting) we plan to be there in force to show the IBM [Messydos] Clown and Mac[donalds] users

what they're missing. Sure the IBMs and Macs can do what the Amiga can do...but at what cost? We'll need to get a planning committee together soon so we can really knock their socks off! If you're interested in helping us plan our assault, phone us.

The Workbench journal will be upgraded and revamped this year. Our dedicated team of would-be Rupert Murdochs are set to typeset their way into fame and glory. Again, if you are into publishing, get in contact with the team (Workbench sub-committee) and pitch in.

Our public Domain disk library is now fully operational after the hand-over from our previous librarian Michael Lamb. David Marks is our new disk librarian and he is the youngest member of our committee. At the tender age of 14, he has taken on the onerous task of getting our PD collection out to our members. After a few hiccups, we are flowing smoothly again with over 500 PD titles in the library and soon to be more!

Microbee Computers at 186 Lygon St. Brunswick East has been generously supporting the AUG by placing our advert in The Age Green Guide each month. Many thanks to Jennifer Freeman and the team at Microbee who are support the corporate and education markets for the Amiga including AMIX (The Amiga's version of UNIX system 5 release 4)

Our thanks also go to Ben Beekman and the team at Master Systems at 40 Station St. Bayswater for the use of the Sharp LCD projector at the last meeting. It gave a great picture Ben, thank you.

Also at the last meeting, we had a door prize, in fact we had three! For the cost of one dollar, you got a bottomless cup of tea/coffee and biscuits and the chance to win one of the door prizes. The prizes were excellent - a box of disks from Kev's computers at 425 Sydney Rd. Coburg, a game from MidiMouse Computers who are at a number of locations and are in the Survival Kit and an Amiga windcheater from Commodore Australia themselves! Who knows what we'll have at the next meeting.

On a more serious note, we are calling for help from our members with experience in accounting practices and knowledge of the finer points of the legalities regarding incorporated associations. We are incorporated under the Associations Incorporations Act 1981 and its subsequent amendments and as such, we have certain legal responsibilities to you, the members and to Corporate Affairs. The committee are not lawyers and we want to make certain all the 'i's are dotted and 't's crossed. We are calling on our membership for help to advise us with money and legal matters so that everything runs smoothly. If you can help (and this is one way you add to the life of the group) please call me on 853-9117 or one of the other committee members.

Hmm! only 132 pages this month!

Well, since YOU write the articles, we all know whose fault that is, don't we?

FISH FISH FISH
WORKBENCH HELL

My God, it's already JANUARY 1991!

SCRAMBLES

(aSsortments of Con's RAMBLES)
your editor's column.

Thanks and congratulations to Hugh Leslie for an excellent disk edition last month.

Speaking of excellent, over the last few months I have been helping my brother with the typing and editing of his pHD thesis using Excellence! I bring this topic up because of the recent debate in this newsletter about the ups and downs of Amiga programs. Well, after having typed 180 pages of a scientific document full of interesting typesetting oddities and challenges, I have reminded myself of just how good Excellence! really is. I can honestly say, that with access to a Postscript laser printer, the program has performed brilliantly, intuitively and above all, surprisingly solidly for the recent months.

Solid? You bet. You see, I don't know if you believe me or not, but Excellence! did not Guru my machine once through the entire document! What's more, is that I never encountered any major typesetting challenges with the program. Surely there must be hope if programs like this are coming out! I think this must explain the time involved in creating version 2 of Excellence! and it not having many more features than the first. Currently, it is probably the sturdiest program I have ever used.

On the editing side of things, you must have noticed the 'window' pages of text. The idea is to create an Amiga environment on paper. Some other ideas yet to be implemented include the idea of icons for each article to show just what sort of article it is (after the grouped headings) and Intuition-type requesters for the grouped headins. Also included is a short contents listing on the info page on page 1. The phone numbers have all been moved to the back, so that all numbers are readily available. There are more ideas that need to be explored, but we need help! Those in the editorial sub-committee should attend the next main meeting to attend the Workbench SIG, and anyone wishing to become part of the editorial sub-committee give me a call. Oh yes, and everyone is welcome to come to the meeting and give their two-bits.

On the game front, I have a few games to recommend. First, is Flood, by BullFrog. It is an unusual game, which I can only describe it as a platform arcade game with very easy controls and very addictive qualities.

Second is PowerMonger, also by BullFrog. This game can be considered the sequel to populous (it is made by the same group) and rather than you taking on the role

of a deity and controlling the world's conditions and your followers beliefs, you are a warmonger, trying to take over the entire world, starting with small islands and very few villages to take over. It has brilliant sound effects (birds flying, hammering, even sheep bleating!), excellent graphics, and an icon-based control system (much like populous). If you are after an arcade game, I recommend the first. If you are after a simulation, definitely check out the second. They are both very good.

For all you disk speed freaks, there are a few hints I can give you to optimize your systems. I'm sure you all have tried the track steprate change programs out there and have been disappointed with miniscule changes to the disk speed. Some of the best ways to speed up directory reads and writes include using the program Blitz A Disk (B.A.D.) or FlashDisk! (only version 0.9 is out at time of printing) set on directory speed. A great program from Chris Hames (our local) which speeds up directory reads is called FSDirs (Fast Smooth Dir's) - it's essentially a hack, but works great on Kickstart 1.2 or 1.3 systems. The Optimize feature on XCopy will do a similar function to BAD. Oh yes, just one point - don't use the hard-drive optimize feature of BAD unless you have at least version 3.15 (the latest at time of printing) as the earlier ones may trash your hard-drives. For file loading, FlashDisk! has an optimize setting which will do this on floppies (later version will do all functions on hard-disk as well). An interesting way of speeding up hard-drive loads is to merge the hunks in the executable files - I only know of one program which will do this at the moment - Imploder (a cruncher, like powerpacker). How does this work? Well what happens when you load an executable file is that as each hunk section is loaded into memory, it is then placed at the relevant memory area, fragmenting your memory in the process. If you have only say, 3 hunks, the computer will load the file in 3 big chunks, and toss them to the relevant area as it finishes loading them (making hard drives even faster, but not really relevant on floppies). Note however, that this is *not* crunching the program, and the program will not have to decrunch on loading! The end result is a slightly smaller, faster loading, more memory efficient program. (You can use this on things like Excellence! - highly recommended too!)

For space-saving on disk, I recommend using LHarc on files that you aren't likely to need regular access to. It seems to always have the best compression. But what about warping disks you say. Well I would recommend LHWarp, but it keeps crashing for me, and doesn't have a nibble mode like the original Warp did. So, if you really want to send a disk over the modem as small as possible, then Warp the disk into two half-disk-sized files without compression, and then compress the .wrp files with LHarc. Simple eh?
Anyway, I've run out of room, so I'll see YOU at the next main meeting.

Amiga Users Group Phone Listings
Amiga Help-Network

The following is a list of AUG members who have volunteered to share their knowledge/experiences with others. If you also want to help and have your name listed here please contact Con Kolivas (484 1339 AH). The names are not listed in any order of priority and the format may change in future listings. Please keep contacts to reasonable hours (6 to 9 pm unless otherwise mentioned) and remember one very important basis of this service - they are volunteers...

Neville Sleep	-	AmigaBasic (beginner level)	- 546 0633
Rudy Kohut	-	AmigaBasic (intermediate) Introduction to the Amiga	- 807 3911
John Elston	-	AmigaBasic (advanced)	- 375 4142
Alan Garner	-	AmigaBasic, A/C Basic	- 879 2683
Mal Woods	-	C(Introductory), Professional Page	- 888 8129
Andrew Gelme	-	C (advanced) - AZTEC	- 645 1744
Eric Salter	-	C (advanced) - LATTICE, TeX	- 853 9117
Norm Christian	-	Amiga Art, Music	- 798 6552
Neil Rutledge	-	Music, Audio Sampling, MIDI	- 597 0928
Russ Lorback	-	Excellence!, Superbase Professional (Beg-Int) After 9:30 pm	- 756 6640
George Wahr	-	Superbase, Bridgeboard	- 376 6180
Bill Jordan	-	Amiga BASIC, A/C + AMOS BASIC	- 417 3521
Lester McClure	-	Lucas/Frances - A1000 32 bit processor system.	- 803 5664
Joe Santamaria	-	Graphic arts - DPaint, Sculpt etc.	- 383 3509

The *Workbench* Editorial Subcommittee

The following is a list of AUG members who have volunteered to help you in the area of article writing for the *Workbench* journal and are topic-specific helpers. You can also help by adding your name to this list.

Nikolai Kingsley	-	CLI & Shell utilities, Programming	- 772 8472
Jim Berry	-	General Interest Articles	- 807 7321
Norm Christian	-	Art & Music Articles	- 798 6552
Rob Pemberton	-	Beginner-Level Articles	- 571 4579
Ben Barrows	-	Humorous Articles	- 888 8608
Rod Paterson	-	Scientific interest Articles.	- 889 2793

The Amiga Users Group Committee

When in real doubt, or you have an enquiry, ask a member of the committee, obviously the most relevant one you can think of. If you want to see your name here, you'll have to be nominated at the Annual General Meeting.

Co-Ordinator	-	Eric Salter	853 9117	Kew
Ass. Co-Ord	-	Lester McClure	803 5664	Mt. Waverley
Meeting Chair	-	Arnold Robbins	808 0551	Box Hill South
Secretary	-	Alan Garner	879 2683	Ringwood
Treasurer	-	Nevile Sleep	546 0633	Springvale
Membership	-	Peter Barton	850 9250	Templestowe
Purchasing	-	Russel Porteous	585 0202	Cheltenham
Book Library	-	Ross Johnson	824 7026	Malvern
Disk Library	-	David Marks	N/A	N/A
Editor	-	Con Kolivas	484 1339	Thornbury
Committee	-	Bob Laidlaw	359 3930	Fawkner
	-	Hugh Leslie	489 1584	Clifton Hill
(Public Officer)	-	Chris Tremelling	527 2594	St. Kilda East
	-	George Wahr	376 6180	Kensington

AUG meets on the
third Sunday of each month

Victoria College
Burwood Campus

We are here
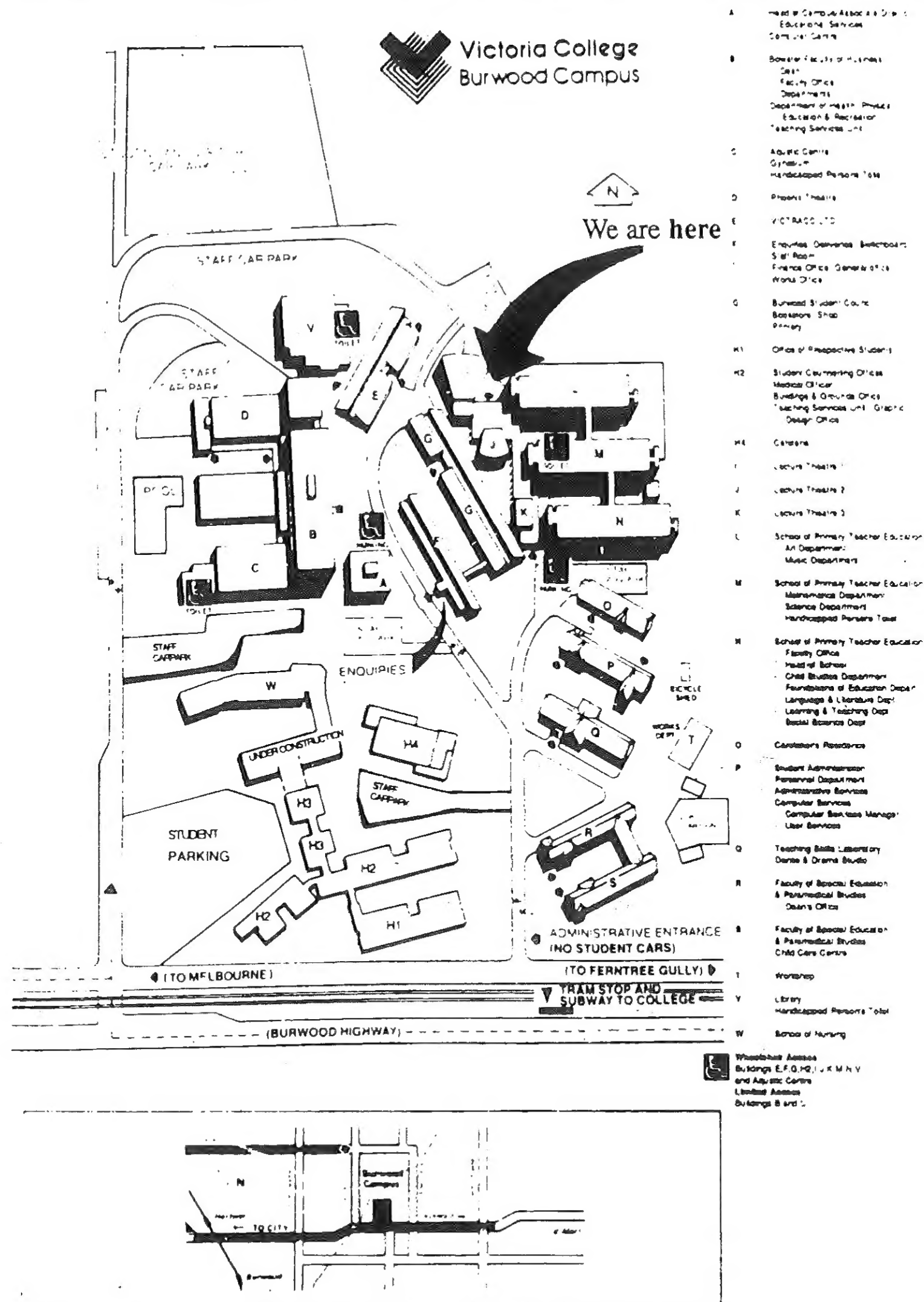
Where is Victoria College, Burwood Campus?

Melways Map 61 reference B5.

People often have difficulty locating our meeting place the first few times. Victoria College is on the North side of Burwood Highway, Burwood, just East of Elgar road. Coming from the City along Burwood Highway, turn left at the first set of traffic lights after Elgar road. Follow the road around past the football oval, over five traffic bumps to the car parking area near the netball courts. Further up the road, to the right, you'll find Lecture Theatre 2.